



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

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MEDIA ADVISORY

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Virginia AmeriCorps Programs Ready to Serve

AmeriCorps swearing in ceremony Nov. 1 kicks off year of volunteer service

Big Stone Gap, Va. – Interviews and photo opportunities are available for the following event:

WHO: Pastor Woody Scott, Governor's Advisory Board on National and Community Service
AmeriCorps members and staff

WHAT: Virginians ready to serve their communities as AmeriCorps members will be sworn in during a ceremony at Mountain Empire Community College. The ceremony is held each fall to introduce new AmeriCorps members embarking on a year of service to the Commonwealth.

Virginia AmeriCorps members who were nominated for the second annual Robert E. Wone Award for Exemplary Service will be honored at the ceremony. The award was established in memory of Robert Wone, a former member of the Governor's Commission on National and Community Service, and recognizes an AmeriCorps member who has exhibited outstanding civic engagement and community service. Award nominees **Jordan Begley of Big Stone Gap and Leah Raffinner of Hillsville** will be recognized at this event. The winner of this year's award was Anthony Simpson of Richmond.

WHERE: Mountain Empire Community College
Goodloe Center
3441 Mt. Empire Rd.
Big Stone Gap, Va.

WHEN: Saturday, Nov. 1
9:30 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.

WHY: AmeriCorps is a network of service programs that connects more than 70,000 Americans each year in intensive service to meet our country's critical needs in education, public safety, health and the environment.

In exchange for their service, AmeriCorps members earn an education award of up to \$4,725 that can be used to pay for college or to pay back qualified student loans. Since 1994, more than **4,700** Virginia residents have qualified for AmeriCorps Education Awards totaling more than **\$17,200,000**.

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Editor's Note: For more information on AmeriCorps programs in Virginia, visit www.vaservice.org. To arrange interviews, contact Carla Harris at (804) 726-7107 or Kimberly Brown at (804) 726-7069.